(b) by when all these proposals are likely to be cleared; and

(c) the details of the schemes/projects being implemented/proposed to be implemented in State by the Ministry during the current year and the next year?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) There is no proposal of Andhra Pradesh Government pending with the Ministry.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Ministry is providing support to scientific research proposals received from research and development institutions, universities, voluntary organisations, State science and technology councils in areas of science popularization, entrepreneurship development, societal activities, natural resource data management, biotechnology, etc., in various States. In Andhra Pradesh, Ministry of Science and Technology has provided financial support to implement projects, such as establishing biotechnology incubator, commercial formulation of potential bio-pesticides for groundnut, millet improvement, establishment of water purification and plasma pyrolysis waste disposal unit, setting up of village information system, establishment of district data centres, etc., for implementation in various institutions.

Separate time-zone for NER

864. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to work out a separate time-zone to save power in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India's width, from Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh, does make a case for having two time zones within the country; and

(d) if so, the action plan of Government to work thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir, The requirement for two time zones for the country was considered by a Committee constituted by the Department of Science and Technology. The Committee considered that given the longitudinal difference between the extreme regions in the country, technically it is possible to have two time zones. But these will be 5 hours and 6 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) respectively, in place of the present uniform IST, which is 5½ hours ahead of GMT. This will be in accordance with international norms. However, it was noted that this will enable savings in daylight hours only by half an hour for the eastern States, whereas there will be a corresponding loss of half an hour in the Central and the Western States. The Committee observed that this does not provide any major advantage, yet on the other hand, pose several difficulties in terms of differential timings for airlines, Railways, radio and TV, STD services etc. A more prudent and effective solution

would be to advance the work timings by one hour in the eastern States; which can be implemented through administrative instructions.

(d) Does not arise

World pro-biotech market

865. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the world's pro-biotech market is to the tune of Rs. 60,000 crores;

(b) whether it is also a fact that India's share in that market is miniscule; and

(c) if so, the efforts Government are making to improve its biotech market, at least to meet its domestic requirements?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) There is no product like pro-biotech and there is no assessment of any world market for pro-biotech products. The common word used in the biotech sector is 'probiotic' in the sense of general microorganisms and their products are used as nutritional supplements.

(c) Biotech market is mainly driven by the market forces. However, the Government is making all efforts to improve the biotech market through various schemes on human resource development from discovery to market; research in strategic areas; public-private partnerships and establishment of critical infrastructure. Tax exemptions and incentives are also provided for promoting biotech industrial growth.

Development of technologies by CSIR

866. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals received under the New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership initiative by CSIR in 2007;

(b) the number alongwith the complete details of the proposals received for developing cutting edge technology in the field of medical equipments and import substitutes;

(c) the details of the proposals approved in the field of development of import substitutes in the field of medical equipments;

(d) the details alongwith the reasons for rejecting the proposals received for developing video endoscopes, etc.; and

(e) the reasons why CSIR is not playing an active role in the development of import substitutes in the field of medical technologies?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) CSIR has received 99 proposals for the year 2007 against the press advertisement under the NMITLI-IOP category of projects.